

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the above-identified application, as currently amended, is respectfully requested.

Applicants note with appreciation the allowance of claims 1-4, 9, 10, 17, 19, 20, 23, 24, 26 and 27. Accordingly, it was decided, at this time, to cancel the sole rejected claim 28 in consideration of Applicants receiving an early formal notification of allowance of the above-identified application.

As to the outstanding rejection of claim 28, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), it has been rendered moot with the cancelling thereof. It is submitted, however, agreeing to the cancelling of this claim should not be construed as acquiescence with regard to the merits of the rejection directed thereto. That is the claim was cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter therein.

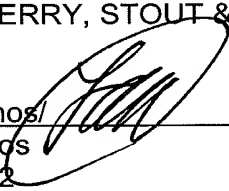
Therefore, having obviated the sole outstanding issue, reaffirmance of the allowability of the remaining claims together with a early formal notification of allowance of the above-identified application is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136. Please charge any shortage in the fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including Extension of Time fees, to the Deposit Account of

Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Dep. Acct. No. 01-2135 (503.40029X00), and
please credit any excess fees to such Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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